Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (original) A method of multi-hop relaying within a cellular network having at least one base station, more than one intelligent relays and at least one user equipment element, said method comprising:

selecting a pilot signal emanating from one of said base station or said more than one intelligent relays based upon strength of said pilot signal at said at least one user equipment element;

reporting a strongest source of said pilot signal to said base station;

distributing an active user list, scheduling information, and routing information among said more than one intelligent relays such that said at least one user equipment element is assigned to a corresponding one of said more than one intelligent relays;

transmitting data from said at least one base station to said more than one intelligent relays;

detecting an address of said at least one user equipment corresponding to said data transmitted from said at least one base station; and

forwarding said data to said at least one user equipment.

2. (original) The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said distributing step is performed via a relay control channel.

3. (original) The method as claimed in claim 2 wherein said detecting step is performed at said more than one intelligent relays.

4. (canceled)

5. (canceled)

6. (original) The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said base station includes a means for power control in coordination with rate control wherein said power control means provides for minimization of interference between base station transmissions and relay transmissions.

7. (canceled)

8. (canceled)

9. (canceled)

10. (canceled)

11. (canceled)

12. (canceled)

13. (canceled)